GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2727
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2000
REGIONAL IMBALANCES IN WEST BENGAL
PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has received any comprehensive memorandum from public respresentatives of North Bengal pertaining to prevailing regional imbalances in North Bengal in the State of West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT, MINISTER OF STATE MINISTRIES OF PLANNING, STATISTICS & PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE)

(a) & (b): Yes Sir, the Planning Commission has received a representation from a the Hon'ble Member of the House regarding lack of infrastructure and developmental facilities and the problem of recurring flood in the districts of the North Bengal. The economic activities relating to Industry and Agriculture are also lagging behind compared to the rest of the State. Some of these issues had also been raised by him earlier under special mention in the House. The Minister for Backward Classes Welfare, West Bengal has also written to the Commission about special problems and requirements of the North Bengal region.

(c) : Balanced economic growth of all areas of the State is the responsibility of the State Government. Therefore, steps for reduction of regional economic imbalances by implementing appropriate development Programmes have to be taken by the State Government only. Accordingly, letters have been addressed in the past to the Chief Minister of West Bengal regarding the points raised by the Hon'ble Member. No acknowledgement was received from the Chief Minister to any of the letters. The Government of West Bengal has been requested to intimate steps initiated to accelerate development of the region. In this context, the State Government has recently constituted North Bengal Development Councilfor integrated and coordinated development of the region with the Chief Minister as its Chairman. The Council is in the process of preparing a long term perspective plan.